



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

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### **City to Plant More Cherry Trees in Downtown Akron Thanks to JANO**

January 18, 2013 (Akron, Ohio) – Forty new Yoshino Cherry trees will be planted along the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath through Downtown Akron this year thanks to a \$10,000 donation received this month from the Japanese Association of Northeast Ohio (JANO). But that is not all -- JANO is also donating \$7,500 in 2014 and \$7,500 in 2015, so that the City may plant 30 more Cherry trees in each of those years as well. Those contributions are being made to accomplish the objective of the JANO Environmental Improvement Program which is supported by the Mitsui Fund.

This all stems from the Mayor's year as president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors (2004-05) and his trips to Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Tokyo. During his tenure as President, Plusquellic was tapped by the Mayor of Hiroshima to be the International Vice President of

“Mayors for Peace,” which seeks a commitment from major nations not to target cities for nuclear attack.

“After admiring the different Cherry trees throughout my trips to Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Tokyo, I wanted to plant these trees in and throughout Downtown, so that our citizens and visitors can enjoy them,” said Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic. “What better way to show off Akron as an International City than to plant Cherry trees which, in Japan, are a symbol of peace.”

In 2011, the City of Akron planted the first phase of the fragrant and pink-blossomed cherry trees along the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath through Downtown Akron.

In 2012, 340 additional cherry trees were planted through a cooperative agreement with the Japanese Association of Northeast Ohio (JANO), which donated \$1,000 to help the city kick off the project and pay for the plantings.

“The Japanese community in Akron and Northeast Ohio believes this is a way to communicate one traditional aspect of our country’s culture,” said Dr. Fukuo Hashimoto, President of JANO, and Senior Scientist, Process Technology with The Timken Company. “When people see this beautiful display each Spring, we hope they will think of the many ways that Japanese-Americans contribute to the success of our country.”

Akron city arborist Bill Hahn has made the planting of the Yoshino, Sargent and Accolade Cherry trees a personal mission to beautify the canal towpath. The trees are located along the Canal between North Street in the Little Cuyahoga River Valley to Thornton Street in South Akron.

“The beauty of the Cherry trees will make a visual impact for certain, however I believe that the Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) assessment we are performing in 2013 will also show that we are making a positive environmental impact as well.”

JANO was established in 1991 as a non-profit association to promote mutual support among Japanese and foster friendship between Japanese and communities in northeast Ohio. Membership is open to anyone interested in Japanese culture. [www.janosakura.org](http://www.janosakura.org) .

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